

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATSON) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 672.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### CONDEMNING PERSECUTION OF BAHA'IS IN IRAN

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 175) condemning the Government of Iran for its state-sponsored persecution of its Baha'i minority and its continued violation of the International Covenants on Human Rights, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

##### H. RES. 175

Whereas in 1982, 1984, 1988, 1990, 1992, 1994, 1996, 2000, 2006, and 2008, Congress declared that it deplored the religious persecution by the Government of Iran of the Baha'i community and would hold the Government of Iran responsible for upholding the rights of all Iranian nationals, including members of the Baha'i faith;

Whereas in November 2007, the Iranian Ministry of Information in Shiraz jailed Baha'is Ms. Raha Sabet, 33, Mr. Sasan Taqva, 32, and Ms. Haleh Roohi, 29 for ostensibly "indirectly teaching the Baha'i Faith" and "engaging in anti-government propaganda" while educating underprivileged children and gave them 4-year prison terms, which they are serving;

Whereas Ms. Sabet, Mr. Taqva, and Ms. Roohi were targeted solely on the basis of their religion;

Whereas, on January 23, 2008, the United States Department of State released a statement urging the Iranian regime to release all individuals held without due process and a fair trial, including the 3 young Baha'is being held in an Iranian Ministry of Intelligence detention center in Shiraz;

Whereas in March and May of 2008, Iranian intelligence officials in Mashhad and Tehran arrested and imprisoned Mrs. Fariba Kamalabadi, Mr. Jamaloddin Khanjani, Mr. Afif Naeimi, Mr. Saeid Rezaie, Mr. Behrouz Tavakkoli, Mrs. Mahvash Sabet, and Mr. Vahid Tizfahm, the members of the coordinating group for the Baha'i community in Iran;

Whereas these seven leaders have been imprisoned for well over a year and are yet to stand trial, the trial having been delayed multiple times;

Whereas official Iranian media has announced they will face charges of "espionage for Israel, insulting religious sanctities and propaganda against the Islamic Republic";

Whereas these seven Baha'i leaders were targeted solely on the basis of their religion; and

Whereas the Government of Iran is party to the International Covenants on Human Rights: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) condemns the Government of Iran for its state-sponsored persecution of its Baha'i minority and its continued violation of the International Covenants on Human Rights;

(2) calls on the Government of Iran to immediately release the seven leaders and all other prisoners held solely on account of their religion, including: Mrs. Fariba Kamalabadi, Mr. Jamaloddin Khanjani, Mr. Afif Naeimi, Mr. Saeid Rezaie, Mr. Behrouz Tavakkoli, Mrs. Mahvash Sabet, Mr. Vahid Tizfahm, Ms. Raha Sabet, Mr. Sasan Taqva, and Ms. Haleh Roohi; and

(3) calls on the President and Secretary of State, in cooperation with responsible nations, to immediately condemn Iran's continued violation of human rights and demand the immediate release of prisoners held solely on account of their religion, including Mrs. Fariba Kamalabadi, Mr. Jamaloddin Khanjani, Mr. Afif Naeimi, Mr. Saeid Rezaie, Mr. Behrouz Tavakkoli, Mrs. Mahvash Sabet, Mr. Vahid Tizfahm, Ms. Raha Sabet, Mr. Sasan Taqva, and Ms. Haleh Roohi.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATSON) and the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

##### GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on the resolution under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from California?

There was no objection.

Ms. WATSON. I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution, and I would like to thank my good friend, the gentleman from Illinois, Congressman MARK KIRK, for his leadership in introducing this important resolution.

H. Res. 175 condemns the Government of Iran for its state-sponsored persecution of its Baha'i minority and of its continued violation of the international covenants on human rights.

Mr. Speaker, resolutions in support of the much persecuted Baha'i communities in the Middle East have a long and proud tradition in the House of Representatives and in the other body. While past resolutions have chronicled the abuse and harassment Baha'is have experienced in several Middle Eastern countries, nowhere is the situation as dire or does it require more urgent action than in Iran, where Baha'is are routinely arrested and face the death penalty.

Iran's Baha'i community forms that country's largest religious minority. It is difficult to know the exact number because Iran has banned communal Baha'i institutions since 1983, but it is estimated that they number over 300,000.

Since 1979, some 200 Baha'is have been executed, and thousands have been imprisoned. They have been systematically denied jobs, pensions, access to higher education, and the right

to inherit property. All Baha'i cemeteries, holy places and other community properties were seized soon after the 1979 revolution. Many sites of the greatest historical significance to the Baha'is have been destroyed, and the graves of Baha'is have been desecrated throughout the country.

In the spring of 2008, seven individuals who had been serving as leaders of the Baha'i community on an ad hoc basis were arrested and were put in Tehran's notorious Evin prison. Their trial date has been repeatedly postponed, and it is still unclear if and when they will face trial.

Official Iranian news agencies have reported that they are charged with espionage for Israel, insulting Islam and with propaganda against the Islamic republic. Family members have been informed of a fourth charge, that of spreading corruption on Earth. Some of these charges could carry the death penalty. The circumstances of this possible trial are particularly worrying because the Government of Iran has arrested and executed the Baha'i leadership on three previous occasions.

In addition to the seven Baha'i leaders, some 25 other Baha'is also remain in prison, including three young people in Shiraz who were arrested in 2006 for indirectly teaching the Baha'i faith and for engaging in antigovernment propaganda while merely carrying out a literacy program for underprivileged youth. These young people are currently serving 4-year sentences under very harsh conditions.

As the United States and the international community seek to engage Iran on the crucial issues of non-proliferation, we must not forget about the basic human rights of the Iranian people. International attention to the persecution of the Baha'is in Iran has been critical to preventing an even worse deterioration of their situation.

As large sections of the Iranian population are now being increasingly repressed and denied the opportunity to have a voice in their own country, it is crucial that others in the international community speak out on their behalf and support them. I urge all of my colleagues to support this important resolution.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BOOZMAN. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, first of all, I want to thank the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. KIRK) for bringing forward this important resolution.

I rise today in strong support of House Resolution 175, which condemns the Iranian regime's continuing persecution of members of the Baha'i faith, Tehran's notoriously cruel regime, which for decades has denied the people of Iran their fundamental human rights and civil liberties.

While the most recent demonstration of the regime's brutality and authoritarianism was the crackdown in the aftermath of the June leadership selection process; for years, Iran has

made a special example of the Iranian Baha'is, oppressing them without respite.

In addition to seizing Baha'i communal property, the Iranian Government prohibits the community from officially assembling; bans them from practicing or teaching their religion; excludes them from the national pension system and from public universities; prevents them from inheriting property; and jails them on account of their faith or on trumped-up charges of espionage.

Accordingly, I urge my colleagues to adopt this resolution, which condemns the Iranian regime's despicable conduct.

Mr. Speaker, totalitarian regimes everywhere, hiding behind the false excuse of state sovereignty, are eager to combat any progress in human rights and freedoms and are eager to expand their repression as far as others will allow them to do.

The Baha'is and countless other Iranians have been robbed of a better future for almost 30 years by a regime which offers nothing but more misery. Therefore, the United States must continue to make clear in both word and deed that the spread of religious freedom and human rights worldwide is not merely an ideal but an imperative. Now is the time for all responsible nations to stand four-square with the Baha'is of Iran in their moment of need.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. KIRK), a member of the Committee on Appropriations and the author of this measure.

Mr. KIRK. Mr. Speaker, as the author of this important resolution, I rise in strong support, and I urge its adoption.

I want to thank the chairman and ranking member for bringing up this resolution on the floor today, and I want to thank Mr. MCGOVERN for helping garner bipartisan support for this effort.

As many of my colleagues know, my district is home to the North American Baha'i Temple located in Wilmette, Illinois. The Baha'i faith was founded in Iran 165 years ago on principles of peace and tolerance. Baha'is are a gentle and nonviolent people. They follow the teachings of Baha'u'llah, who taught respect for Moses, Jesus and Mohammad, teaching respect and tolerance around the world.

Yet, since the Iranian revolution of 1979, the Government of Iran has committed a deliberate campaign of discrimination, harassment, detention, arrests, imprisonment, and the execution of one of their largest religious minorities. Based solely on their religious beliefs, Baha'is in Iran are now denied jobs, are robbed of pensions, are stripped of property rights, and are forced to endure the barbarous desecra-

tion of their holy sites as well as forced to watch their leaders being imprisoned and executed.

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Last spring, seven leaders of the Baha'i community were arrested and detained in Tehran's notorious Evin prison. Their trial date has been repeatedly postponed as they languish in prison without legal resource. Although no charges have been publicly filed, Iranian news agencies report that these individuals will be charged with "espionage for Israel, insulting Islam, propaganda against the Islamic Republic, and spreading corruption on Earth." Conviction of these crimes carries a penalty of death.

We know what happened the last time the Iranian regime struck the Baha'i community leadership. In August of 1980, all of the members of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is were executed. We should do all we can to prevent such a crime against humanity from being committed again.

As the President pursues his negotiation policy with the brutal Iranian dictators, we should not forget the kind of people we are dealing with. Iran denies its citizens basic human rights and is persecuting its minorities and executes what they call apostates. If our diplomats ignore Iranian Baha'is and silence the voice of Iranian human rights activists, America will have failed a great moral test in Iran.

Today, the House of Representatives sends a signal to the Iranian regime, and it contains an important message. The U.S. Congress will expose this regime that murders innocent women and children in the streets and denies citizens basic human rights. To the dictators in Iran we say, release your political prisoners, especially release your Baha'i prisoners, and end your ignorant and uncultured persecution of the peaceful Baha'is.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Ken Bowers, the secretary general of the National Spiritual Assembly of the Baha'is, and Juana Conrad, the deputy secretary, for their steadfast devotion to their fellow Baha'is worldwide. I also want to thank the Local Spiritual Assemblies in Arlington Heights, Deerfield, Glencoe, Glenview, Northbrook, Palatine, Vernon Hills, Waukegan and Wilmette for contributing to our community and calling attention to this human rights abuse.

Thank you also to Hans Hogrefe from Chairman BERMAN's hardworking staff and Jeff Philipps and Richard Goldberg of my staff for bringing this to the floor. A special thanks to Kit Bigelow and Shastri Purushotma from the National Spiritual Assembly of Baha'is of the United States for their dedication and pursuit of religious freedom and human rights for Baha'is worldwide.

I cannot for the life of me think of what's going on in Iran that she would commit such crimes against 330,000 peaceful Baha'is in Iran. I am worried that the Iranian intelligence service

and ministry has now registered the address of every Baha'i and every Baha'i business in the country. I am worried that they have already labeled Baha'i businesses as ineligible for government contracting.

We have seen the bureaucracy of a new Kristallnacht formed in Iran. I worry that with this bureaucracy now fully formed, we could see a tremendous human rights abuse occur against hundreds of thousands of peaceful individuals. That's why this resolution is so important, not just to call attention to crimes that have been committed, but to a potential crime against humanity, which, in my judgment, the dictators of Iran are fully capable of committing. That's why this institution rises to its fullest potential, underscoring the point that America is not the most powerful, best nation in the world because we are rich or have a large military, but because we represent the moral authority of a democratic people representing the dignity of each individual on this planet.

I urge adoption of this resolution and thank the Members.

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. Speaker, having no more speakers on the subject, again, I want to thank the gentleman from Illinois for bringing forward this very important resolution and urge my fellow Members to adopt it.

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of defending the human rights of everyone throughout the world. The United States must seek to uphold and protect human rights here at home as well as abroad. I stand in solidarity with the people of the Baha'i faith and all faiths that endure persecution based on their religious beliefs. As such, I strongly support the stated intention of this resolution.

As we aim a critical eye to the Iranian government's human rights violations, we can only do so with credibility if we turn the critical eye on our own country. For example, institutionalized discrimination based on gender and sexual orientation persists throughout the U.S. All human beings deserve security and equal protection under the law.

Furthermore, supporting the Baha'i faith by condemning Iran is antithetical to principles that are central to the Baha'i faith. The Baha'i teachings are built on the values of peace and unification. Condemnation, or the act of placing blame, separates and antagonizes. Condemnation of Iran with intent to rattle the sabers of war would not be something I support; nor do I believe it would be supported by those of the Baha'i faith.

In the spirit of honoring the Baha'i faith we, should work to end persecution. Rather than condemning Iran in order to forward an aggressive agenda, this body would do better to support the efforts of the Administration to engage Iran in high-level diplomatic negotiations. Engaging Iran diplomatically honors the spirit of unity that is central to the Baha'i faith and brings us closer to peace.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATSON) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 175, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. KIRK. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

# EXPRESSING CONDOLENCES REGARDING ATTACK ON UNITED NATIONS WORLD FOOD PROGRAM OFFICE IN ISLAMABAD, PAKISTAN

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 823) expressing deep condolences to the families, friends, and colleagues of those killed and injured in the attack on the United Nations World Food Program (WFP) office in Islamabad, Pakistan, on October 5, 2009, and support for the WFP's mission to bring emergency food aid to the most vulnerable people of Pakistan and around the world.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

## H. RES. 823

Whereas the United Nations World Food Program (WFP) was established in 1962 with the goal of providing every man, woman, and child with access at all times to the food needed for an active and healthy life;

Whereas the WFP seeks to save lives and protect livelihoods in emergencies, prepare for emergencies, restore and rebuild lives after emergencies, reduce chronic hunger and under-nutrition everywhere, and strengthen the capacity of countries to reduce hunger;

Whereas WFP operations in 2008 reached just over 102,000,000 hungry and poor people in 78 countries with 3,900,000 tons of food;

Whereas 84.6 percent of the population of Pakistan earns less than \$2 per day, which is an indication of poor human development, especially among women and children;

Whereas since 1968, the WFP has invested more than \$1,500,000,000 in assistance to the most food-insecure people in Pakistan, including those in remote areas and those affected by conflict;

Whereas WFP operations in Pakistan include school feeding, mother and child nutrition, and socio-economic development programs that improve school enrollment rates for girls, access to health care services, and economic opportunities for rural women;

Whereas the WFP is providing vital food assistance to as many as 10,000,000 people across Pakistan, including emergency relief to as many as 2,000,000 Pakistani civilians who were displaced by conflict in the Swat Valley region earlier this year;

Whereas, on October 5, 2009, a suicide bomber attacked the WFP office in Islamabad, Pakistan, killing five employees,

Botan Ahmed Ali Al-Hayawi, Farzana Barkat, Abid Rehman, Gulrukh Tahir, and Mohamed Wahab;

Whereas the Executive Director of the WFP, Josette Sheeran, called the attack "a tragedy—not just for WFP—but for the whole humanitarian community and for the hungry"; and

Whereas support for food aid and other forms of humanitarian assistance in Pakistan is in the moral and national security interests of the United States: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

(1) expresses its deep condolences to the families, friends, and colleagues of those killed and injured in the attack on the United Nations World Food Program (WFP) office in Islamabad, Pakistan, on October 5, 2009;

(2) recognizes the critical role the WFP plays in helping alleviate poverty, which can be exploited by extremists to create instability, in Pakistan and the greater South Asian region;

(3) reaffirms its support for the WFP's mission to bring emergency food aid to the most vulnerable people of Pakistan and around the world; and

(4) commends the approximately 10,000 people of the WFP directly serving the hungry and poor across the world for their invaluable contribution to bringing relief to those most in need.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATSON) and the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

## GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from California?

There was no objection.

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, on October 5, 2009, five dedicated humanitarians were killed and four others injured by a suicide bombing inside the World Food Program's office in Islamabad, Pakistan. The victims of this senseless attack were impartial civilian aid workers devoted to feeding the hungry and providing a lifeline to millions of the most vulnerable people in Pakistan.

The United Nations World Food Program has been on the front lines of fighting hunger worldwide since its inception in 1962.

I want to recognize, and I want to thank the sponsor of this resolution, my distinguished colleague and good friend from Connecticut, Ms. ROSA DELAURO, for taking the lead in introducing this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I stand in strong support of this resolution, which expresses our sympathy and deepest condolences for the vic-

tims and families of this month's deadly suicide bombing at the U.N. World Food Program offices in Islamabad, Pakistan.

We mourn the loss of five humanitarian aid workers who were killed in a senseless act of violence while they were simply trying to supply food to the millions of vulnerable and hungry people of Pakistan. This deadly attack by a Taliban suicide bomber on October 5 forced the U.N. to temporarily close its offices, which resulted in the disruption of food assistance to nearly 10 million starving people in Pakistan who are dependent on the World Food Program.

Mr. Speaker, we should not allow such cowardly acts of violence to overshadow the vital work of the World Food Program, whose efforts have relieved the suffering and hunger of millions of people in Pakistan and around the world.

Since 1968, the U.N. World Food Program has invested more than \$1.5 billion in assistance to the poor citizens of Pakistan alone.

The World Food Program has also carried out food security efforts and has developed nutritional and socioeconomic programs that have improved access to health care, increased school enrollment for women and girls, and advanced economic opportunities for the poor. In fact, amid recent violence in Pakistan's North West Frontier Province, the World Food Program courageously pushed forward to provide emergency and hunger relief to 2 million displaced Pakistanis.

Today, it is important not only to recognize the crucial role of the World Food Program in the fight to alleviate poverty and world hunger, but to reaffirm our appreciation for its mission to feed the world's poor. It's also important to pause momentarily to remember those aid workers who sacrificed their lives this month in the course of their work to relieve human suffering and hunger.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly urge the passage of this resolution condemning this heinous attack and reinstating our support for the work of the World Food Program.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentlelady from Connecticut, Representative ROSA DELAURO.

Ms. DELAURO. I thank the gentlewoman for this time. I thank Chairman BERMAN for moving so quickly in this effort. I also want to thank Congressman JIM MCGOVERN and JO ANN EMERSON for co-leading this bipartisan effort with me.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of House Resolution 823. It expresses deep condolences to families, friends, and colleagues of those who were killed and injured in the attack on the U.N. World Food Program at their offices in Islamabad, Pakistan, on October 5, 2009.